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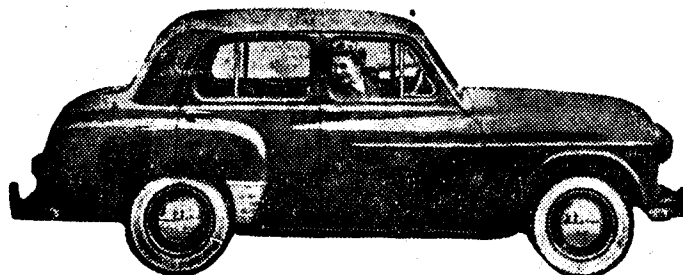
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SOCCER NEWS

The Magazine of the
VICTORIAN AMATEUR SOCCER FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Editor and Treasurer: Morrie Buckner, 562 St. Kilda Road. Phone: Win. 4414.

Vol. 8, No. 22.

Saturday, August 27, 1955.

Amateur Soccer in Victoria

...ces Up To It, And Now ...

The Fight Is On

So much misinformation has been written and spoken publicly in recent weeks by so-called Soccer "experts," whose job it has been to BOOST Soccer, but who have been using their positions in what appears to have been an attempt to SMASH Soccer, that the Victorian Soccer Council has been forced to take steps to remove these fifth columnists from official publicity channels.

Their attempt to poison the minds of Soccer fans against everything and everybody working FOR Victorian Soccer had succeeded to such an extent that it culminated recently in a shocking exhibition of bad manners—the booing of a Victorian team when it took the field against the invincible Austrian Rapid Club.

Threats!

However, they still have newspaper channels through which they can continue to pour out their misguided, bitter and egotistical brand of venom. And their swashbuckling reaction to criticism of their statements by Council members has been a thinly-veiled threat made in a form of journalistic blackmail that adds up to this: "Kick us out of our official appointments and we'll use our daily press channels to smash you."

The Council feels that it can no longer submit itself, or the sport of Soccer, to such high-handed treatment. Win or lose, for better or worse, it will fight such tactics.

But it cannot stand alone in this battle. This is a rallying call to all Clubs, Committees, and supporters. Close your ranks. Learn to recognise destructive criticism for what it is, and what it is intended to be—an attempt to smash amateur Soccer in Victoria.

Pledge your support, or voice your constructive thoughts, to your Council delegate, or through "SOCCER NEWS." NOW!

Sad Blow for "SOCCER NEWS"

We have lost our Editor. Mainly on medical grounds, partly on account of pressure of work, Mr. Murray Master-ton, the man who made our 1955 SOCCER NEWS the sparkling weekly that it is, has found it necessary to submit his resignation.

As a result, editorial contributions should now be addressed to:

Morrie Buckner,
562 St. Kilda Road,
Melbourne



At the Showgrounds last Saturday, HAKOAH surprised by battling JUVENTUS to a 2-all draw. Here we see a determined attack by Joe Gottesman, who seems to have beaten JUVENTUS defenders Ravagnan and Novaselich. But Joe was disappointed . . . his kick went astray.

V.A.S.F.A. BULLETIN

Compiled
weekly by the
V. A. S. F. A.
Secretary,
Stuart Beaton



Due to many requests, I am using the space reserved for the official bulletin to comment on matters which have been widely discussed by Soccer followers in recent weeks. The comments, of course, are given from a personal point of view, and should not be regarded as official.

REFEREE HECHT.

In "Soccer News" of August 20, it has been stated that a member of the Referees' Association criticised the Victorian Soccer Association for not making any move to alter the referees for the match Austria v. China until the evening of the match.

Such a statement is incorrect, as the Referees' Association were informed 24 hours before the game commenced that referee Hecht was unacceptable to the Austrian team, and referee Hutchison had been selected to replace referee Hecht.

The official who made the above incorrect statement also mentioned that the referees thought Hecht should have been the referee.

So also do the V.A.S.F.A. After all, we selected him. I hope that Emil Hecht will stay with us. He is well liked and is efficient. It has been stated in the press that the V.A.S.F.A. persuaded the referees to officiate on the Tuesday evening.

This statement is also incorrect. The credit is due to Messrs. Dignam, Hadfield and Rodgers, of the referees' executive.

"SOCCER NEWS."

In recent weeks several controversial articles have been featured. The public is entitled to know what is going on, but I consider that personal statements stating that "Tom Smith is not a friend of Jim Brown" should be excluded.

The broadcasting stations have come under fire, but on many occasions I have invited all Soccer

Sniping the Snipers

Democracy is regarded by Australians as a holy institution, but they use their democratic rights in some amusing ways.

For instance, they will vote for a political candidate. He is successful. For the duration of his term in office, many of the people who voted for him will refer to him, if they think of him at all, as a hopeless clot. At the next election, they nominate him and elect him again.

WHY?

Mainly because it's easier to "let George do it." His electors and self-appointed critics are unwilling to do as he does . . . to sacrifice their time, their social life and their labour for the common good.

That is precisely the situation and atmosphere which surrounds the Victorian Soccer Council. Most of the present Councillors are men who have devoted most of their spare time, for most of their lives, to Soccer.

Most of their critics are of the type who TALK a great deal, but who, for a multitude of glib reasons, find that they can DO nothing for Soccer.

They are the snipers.

There is also the type who joins a Club, Committee, or Council, and as soon as he discovers that he is not the boss of a one-man show, he quits in a huff, and thereafter becomes a life-member of the Snipers' Guild.

Then there is the sniper who pushes himself forward for an appointment, then, finding the job a mite tedious, fails to see out the season.

As a result, it falls to the same small group of devoted men to labour, year after year, after year, for the administration and propagation of the game . . . to deal with affiliates, finance, inter-State and international tours, coaching, selection, discipline, fixtures, player status, publicity, school propaganda, and the hundreds of problems that crop up in any one season.

Their reward is too often, as now, abuse, instead of praise, destructive criticism instead of the constructive help they deserve.

Let us all join in a campaign . . . since snipers, critics and back-biters will not help Soccer, let us silence them, or at least ignore them.

followers to forward suggestions to me. To date the response has been nil.

The press has taken credit for suggesting the match Austria v. South China. Such a match was mooted and discussed by the Australian Association weeks before the press mentioned the matter.

I am perfectly sure that the Council, comprising twenty men elected by the clubs, is quite capable of dealing with difficulties as they arise. I would suggest that the press in general print more constructive criticism and less sensationalism.

—STUART BEATON.

Know Your Councillors

KURT DEFRIS

It's a pity that this story must be offered in brief form. Actually, this should be the first of a five-part serial entitled, "KURT DEFRIS, His Life and Times," because this man's life has contained more phases than an historical age. I shall do my best to compress a few highlights into a page or two.

This indestructible Viennese bundle of energy had to survive both Hitler's machine for mass man destruction and the Japanese steamroller in China, before coming to Australia. That he did so has proved a good thing for local Soccer.

How many critics of the Victorian Selection Committee are aware that Kurt, who is one of the three selectors, was for years a famous outside right in Austria, a country swarming with high-class players?

He first played at the age of 14 for the juniors of the Vienna Association Football Club. In those days, a fellow player was Max Gold, who is currently Manager of the visiting RAPID team.

Later, after four years with the highly-ranked Fair Unitas Academic Club, Kurt was elected by 500 clubs to represent them on the Austrian Football Association.

Played for Vienna HAKOAH

Although still an amateur, he was invited to become a member and play for the world-renowned professional VIENNA HAKOAH. Kurt accepted, and played for HAKOAH on several thrilling occasions.

At the same time, he was a highly-ranked table tennis player. In this sport, however, he has had to play second fiddle to his wife—at one time Mrs. Defris was ranked third in the world grading of women players!

For two years, Kurt managed the Austrian National Amateur Soccer and Table Tennis Teams on their tours of France, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. He was nearing the top of the tree in the administration of sport in Austria.

Hitler Strikes

Then, in 1938, his country was blacked out by Hitler's anchluss. By devious means, Kurt escaped and fled to China.

In Shanghai, he joined the Jewish Recreation Club, which con-

tained a great many refugees from Europe, and immediately set about the successful organisation of a special Jewish athletic competition, involving 60 soccer teams, over 200 table tennis teams, and sections for boxing and swimming.

At the same time, Kurt played his usual wing position for the J.R. Club in the Shanghai League's first division. This league featured a number of national teams famous in the East — the Russian SOKOL, the British EAST SURREYS, the Portuguese LUISITANO, the French A.S.F., the Japanese TUNG WEN, and the Chinese TUNG HWA. It is interesting to note that, at that time, Mr. Lee Wai Tong, at present Secretary - Coach of the touring SOUTH CHINA ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION, was Manager of TUNG HWA.

If further proof of Kurt's adaptability and popularity is required, surely it lies in the fact that he was elected President of the International Table Tennis Association of Shanghai, which boasted over 10,000 registered players — AND KURT WAS THE ONLY NON-CHINESE IN THE ASSOCIATION!

Suspected by Japanese

Then came the Japanese. Being a refugee from the western end of East-West Axis, Kurt's influential positions with the virile, sporting sections of Shanghai's population brought him under the notice of the Occupational Force. They promptly stripped him of all appointments, and he was relegated to the scrap-heap for the duration of the war.

But he wasn't forgotten by his countless friends. As soon as the war ended, he was unanimously chosen by all the clubs of the Shanghai Soccer League as selector, covering all foreign teams in the league. Even the Chinese Government recognised him by offer-

Do you really know the men who give up all of their spare time for the advancement of Soccer? This is the second of a series in which MORRIE BUCKNER tells you what you should know about them.

ing him citizenship if he would stay in China and organise all amateur sport in Shanghai.

But by this time, Kurt yearned to see his parents and relatives again . . . and they were in Australia. In 1946, this solid citizen made his home here.

Back With HAKOAH

It wasn't long before he was back in Soccer, this time with HAKOAH. He still shakes with mirth when he recalls the first game he saw played by HAKOAH at Preston. Eight players assembled. To play a game, Nat Spicer, then HAKOAH'S Manager, stripped, and thirteen spectators were persuaded to do likewise. Eventually, 22 players took the field. The brand of Soccer played that day can be left to the imagination.

HAKOAH has come a long way since then . . . and Kurt has been its Secretary-Manager for a long time. Characteristically, though, he gives all the credit to stalwarts Jack Skolnik, Tony Rubinstein, and other committee-men.

Joins Victorian Council

Four years ago, he joined the League Management Committee, and two years later was invited by Mr. W. R. Thomas, Chairman of the Victorian Soccer Council, to stand for that body. He did so, and was elected.

Since then, Kurt has carried much more than his share of the load of Victorian Soccer. As a State Selector, as a member of the League Management Committee, the Disciplinary Committee, and the International League Committee, as Acting Treasurer of the Council, as the first New Australian Manager of the Victorian and Australian Test Teams, 1955, he has proven his ability and tirelessness where Soccer is concerned.

Of all his duties, there is only one that he dislikes intensely—serving on the Disciplinary Committee. He hates to sit in judgment of his fellow-man. That is probably one of the reasons for his popularity . . . Kurt likes everybody, and it follows quite naturally that everybody likes Kurt!

The Barr-Wilson Controversy

The printed debate between Alex Barr and Jackie Wilson has reached the stage of personal re- crimination. Parts of Jackie's letter should not have been published last week, and the same applies to Alex's reply, which is now in our hands.

Rather than print only part of Alex's letter, we declare the matter closed, at least as far as "SOC- CER NEWS" is concerned.

Yanks Take Up Soccer

The American Air Force in Ger- many has a championship Soccer competition, with servicemen from ten airfields competing.

American forces in England, France and Austria are organising similar competitions.

Country Soccer Grows

Northern Victoria and Goulburn Valley

Soccer is growing rapidly in the northern parts of Vic- toria, where an Interstate Association has been formed.

Teams from Shepparton, Al- bury, Bendigo, Benalla, Cobram, Kerang, Swan Hill and Puckapun- yal already compete, and Echuca is

organising a team from resident players of at least seven nationali- ties.

Captain of the team will prob- ably be Tuval Tibor, 24-year-old butcher from Switzerland, who has represented his country against Italy, New Zealand and China. He is at present a member of the suc- cessful Shepparton Rovers.

Puckapunyal wants

Sunday Games

Metropolitan teams that would like a Sunday trip to Puckapunyal for a game are invited to get in touch with Mr. Lee, 70 High St., Shepparton.

This should be an ideal trip for a picnic visit during the early spring season.

Interesting to those people who don't know—the greatest capacity of any league ground in England is Maine Road, Manchester, 86,000. In Scotland, Hamden Park, Glas- gow, 150,000 (now restricted to 135,000); Ireland, Lindfield, Bel- fast, 70,000 (known as Windsor Park).

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Daring Decision ...

COUNCIL in CAMERA

After expressions of support from all Councillors present at last Monday night's meeting, a very daring decision was reached. In future, no non-members of Council will be permitted entry to meetings of either the Council or its Committees. Where necessary, a statement would be issued after the meetings by the presiding Chairman or the Secretary.

The primary object of this resolution is to prevent the Press from seizing, as they have often done in the past, upon a single statement uttered in Council, lifting it from its context, and using it to the detriment of Soccer.

All shades of opinion converged toward this decision, and were aptly summed up by Mr. Nat Rothfield, Vice-President of the V.A.S.F.A.

He opened his statement by regretting that, while Council had done all in their power to help Press representatives, they had remained hostile. They were present at meetings week after week. No report ever appeared in the Press concerning the constructive efforts, the developmental plans, or the Council's minor or major successes in relation to the propagation or administration of soccer.

Sought Only Trouble

They waited patiently, Mr. Rothfield said, until a minor failure or disagreement was referred to by an officer, a committee, or an affiliate. This they would pounce upon, and with their own subtle methods of dissection, would produce a distorted mountain of calamity out of a tiny molehill.

"They have been given a lengthy and reasonable trial," said Mr. Rothfield, "and have proved themselves unworthy of the confidence placed in them."

"I have sat on many directorates," he went on, "and in my considered opinion, this Council is as sound and constructive and responsible as any board—industrial, commercial, charitable or social—with which I have had experience. Yet it pleases those sections of the Press with which we have been in contact to constantly seek ways and means to discredit us, individually and as a body."

Press Caused Trouble

Mr. Rothfield pointed out that, in all probability, the Council made no more operational mistakes than the directorate of General Motors-Holdens Ltd. Of the latter, or any other large organisation, only the achievements were publicised, and none of the failures. Of the Council, only its failures were publicised, and none of its achievements.

"The utterances of the Press would imply," said Mr. Rothfield, "that the Victorian Soccer Council is an effete and redundant body, and had made no progress in its many years of existence. We all know how far that is from the truth."

Pointing to trouble caused by the Press in connection with the Middle Park, Camberwell, and Brighton grounds, Mr. Rothfield concluded, amid a chorus of "hear, hears," by stating that, as long as the Press used its privilege of entry to Council meetings solely for the purpose of obtaining information to be used in a hostile manner, Council had the prerogative, even the duty, to deny them that privilege.

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SKOLNIK CUP TODAY

Victoria v. South Australia

Today, the long-awaited clash between the South Australian Under-20 team and the Victorian Under-20 team will take place at the Showgrounds.

By kind permission of Juventus, the match will be played as a curtain-raiser to the Juventus-Moreland league game.

Possession of the coveted Skolnik Cup, at present held by Victoria, hinges on the result. It was captured in Adelaide, and the spirited expeditionary force from South Australia have sworn to take it back.

This is the youngest team in this category ever fielded by South Australia, their average age being only 17. For most of them, too, this is the first time they have been selected to represent their State. Win or lose, we wish them good luck and a pleasant stay in Victoria.

Here are some details of the visiting team:

John van der Veehen: Captain. Age, 19. Born in Holland. Utility half back. Plays for Birkalla. Second time he has represented his State.

BUSIDONI Tops the Poll

Mario Busidoni (Juventus) has shot away to a four-vote lead for the annual "ARGUS" Best and Fairest Medal.

Australian selection of Jackie Wilson (Brighton) and Syd Thomas (Hakoah) has proved a handicap to both players in aggregate votes. By playing for Australia against Rapid and South China in Sydney, both Wilson and Thomas missed a league game here, in which they may have gained votes.

Aggregate votes are as follows:

M. Busidoni (Juventus)	28
J. Wilson (Brighton)	24
P. Blunt (Yallourn)	23
S. Thomas (Hakoah)	18
F. Lauchran (Moreland)	17
W. Lawrie (Polonia)	15
P. Vidovic (J.U.S.T.)	14
H. Jakubowski (Polonia)	14

Graham Kettewell: Age, 16. Born in England. Wing half back. Plays for Portsmouth-Plympton. In Australia only one year.

Kevin Bellwood: Born in Australia. Goalkeeper. Plays for Port Thistle. On borderline for State selection for three years.

Peter Bernhardt: Age, 16. Born in Australia. Half back. Plays for Sturt.

Harry Banbacas: Age, 16. Born in Australia. Goalkeeper. Plays for Portsmouth-Plympton. Last-minute selection, and first year in intermediate soccer.

Alan Bitmead: Age, 18. Born in Australia. Utility forward. Plays for Railways.

Graham Mahr: Age, 18. Born in Australia. Full back. Plays for Port Thistle. Known to his teammates as Tubby.

Graham Messner: Age, 17. Born in Australia. Centre half. Plays for Sturt.

Jimmy Mathie: Age, 17. Born in Scotland. Forward wing. Plays for Sturt. In Australia seven years. Like most Scotch boys, can kick with both feet.

Zeron Mikulski: Age, 18. Born in Ukraine. Inside forward. Plays for Lion. Only European migrant in team.

Bill Murray: Age, 17. Born in Scotland. Inside forward. Plays for Port Adelaide.

Barry Sutherland: Age, 17. Born in England. Utility back. Plays for Orange.

Brinn Williams: Age, 17. Born in England. Half back. Plays for Orange.

Robin Wesson: Age, 19. Born in England. Inside forward. Plays for Portsmouth-Plympton.

Roger Black: Age, 17. Born in Australia. Centre forward. Plays for Enfield.

We wish these boys every success.

—DENIS CHAMBERS.

IL NUOVO

BRAUN

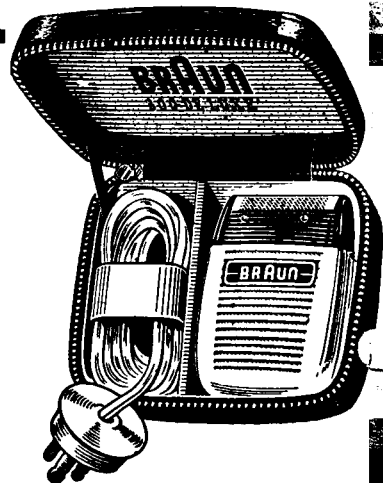
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(Under 20)

VICTORIA v. STH. AUSTRALIA

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Sharp	Williams
Zerger	Black
Armstrong	Mikulski
Allen	Wesson
Paton	Bitmead
Rankin	van der Veehen
Pheiffer	Mathie

2.45 p.m.

JUVENTUS v. MORELAND

Ravagnan	Tessari
Picinich	Heath
Guardiani	Clarke
Novaselich	Muzzin
Busidoni	Stott
Kassai	Stevenson
Begnini	Clark
Bottari	Finlay
Plateo	Coster
Carollo	Moren
Zavatier	Lauchran

AT CAMPBELL RESERVE, MORELAND

1.00 p.m.

GEORGE CROSS v. J.U.S.T.

Camilleri	Terlikowski
Muscat	Scipione
Calleja, J.	Terek
Gerada	Krambehr
Calleja, R.	Rakic
Stacey	Zakomarok
Zammit	Sénisen
Mosca	Paier
Copeland	Jurkowski
Trinder	Vidovic
Swan	Stefanovic

2.45 p.m.

HAKOAH v. BRIGHTON

Doenges
Harburn
McIntosh
Vacirca
Jack
Vesovic
Thomas
Rice
Gottesman
Sutherland
Piercy

Scott
Thompson
Drummond
Waitzer
Macartney
Thomas

Ritchie
Hirst
Balabansky
Wilson
McKenzie

AT SURREY PARK

2.45 p.m.

BOX HILL v. POLONIA

McArthur	Bramkowski or
Patterson	Czauderna
Vandenberg	Capobus
Morrow	Jakubowski
Garland	Wemyss
Colman	Lawrie
McPhee	Plekan
Robbins	Johnson
McClusky	Strahan
McLeod	Schipperheyn
McFeeters	Blackley
	Pittoni

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DOCKERTY CUP

Sat. POLONIA
Sept. 17 v.
WILHELMINA

Sat. JUVENTUS
Sept. 24 v.
HAKOAH

AT TURNER RESERVE

Footscray v. Yallourn

Brydson
McIntosh
Kelly

Berry
Darling
Brien

Reilly
Tannahill
Gilmour
Glennie
Lowe

Blunt

Saxelby
Edmondson

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Roberts
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PRAHRAN.—White; McGuiness, Ross; Hoolihan, Walker, Williamson;
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v.
VIC. COLTS.—(Not Notified).

SLAVIA.—Kiss; Kriz, Kodak; Kotatko, Roznetinski, Vlcek; Slavik, Lach-
man, Dickson, Engelbogen, Brenner.

v.
GEELONG.—(Not Notified).

SOUTH MELBOURNE.—Key; Simpson, Jays; Heyes, Neill, Eagleton;
Denny, Elder, Cook, Senior, James.

v.
PRESTON.—(Not Notified).

SOUTH YARRA.—Campbell; Boudrie, Foley; Grant, Sharp, Bain; Gib-
bons, Harris, Wales, Wallace, Bolton.

v.
MACCABI.—(Not Notified).

SUNSHINE CITY.—Boudrie; Smith, Whitmore; Sterling, Sweeney, Car-
roll; Baker, J., Johnson, Baker, D., Reddy, Docksey.

v.
PARK RANGERS.—(Not Notified).

PHOTOGRAPHS

Sam Gold, official "Soccer News" photographer, will supply prints of any photograph of his which has appeared in "Soccer News" this season.

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Curtain Raiser, 1.45 p.m.:
The Argus v. G. M. Holden



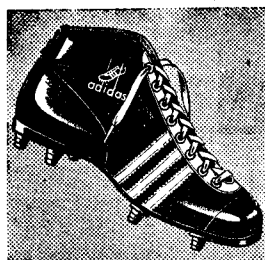
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3UL, Warragul	9.00 p.m.	3BA, Ballarat	9.00 p.m.
3BO, Bendigo	9.30 p.m.	3HA, Hamilton	9.30 p.m.
3CS, Colac	8.30 p.m.	3SR, Shepparton	9.30 p.m.
3SH, Swan Hill	8.30 p.m.	3TR, Sale	9.30 p.m.
3YB, Warrnambool	8.30 p.m.	3NE, Wangaratta	8.30 p.m.



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TIT - BITS

from Spotter



In Sydney on Saturday, the Austrian team Rapid were forced to play one of the local lads in their game against South China. This was brought about by the heavy crop of injuries and the hard games they had played in the previous week.

So impressed was Mr. Gold, the Team Manager, that he said after the game that he would like to take the young lad back to play with the club.

Congrats., Jim de Pyper, on a grand game and three beautiful goals.



The Banana boys are still high over the selection of Test teams. They claim that all is not as it

should be with the method used in selecting the team to represent Australia. Antiquated, is the word they use, and I am inclined to agree. They suggest that we ask our Associations to make moves to have equal representation on this very important committee.

West Australia and Tasmania have no say in the selection of teams; yet N.S.W. have two representatives. Well, what about it?



Our feast of good soccer is not yet over. True to their word, the South Africans have sent a side that would do justice in any amateur competition.

I'm tipping these boys will show us another brand of football that will keep our players guessing.



After watching England schoolboys beat Scotland schoolboys by one goal to nil at Wembley on April 3, 1954, ninety thousand people went cheerfully home. They had seen a spectacle that renewed their confidence in British football.



That player who threatened the referee with death should consider himself very fortunate that he only has to front the stipes at the Association. Not only did he pick a man that has a list of fights under his belt that would shame Jimmy Carruthers, but he could quite easily have been up on a fair sort of civil charge.



I believe the student coaches would give anything for a school for selectors. Many are having trouble from members of "The Old School."

The South China Club we have just finished entertaining boasts of a membership of over 10,000 and owns a ground capable of holding 20,000 spectators.

It sponsors basketball, tennis, volleyball, baseball, softball, swimming, table tennis, track and field events, as well as gymnastics.



There should be good Soccer here when the South Africans arrive. It has been suggested that this side is the best ever to tour any other country.

Final of DUNKLING SHIELD

The final of the competition for the DUNKLING SHIELD was played last Wednesday at Fawcner Park. This issue went to press on Tuesday, except for the centre page, and if we received the result in time, you'll find it there.

Finalists were Oakleigh Technical School and the University High School. The former entered the final by defeating Richmond Technical School, 4—2, after extra time. The latter won their way to the final by caning Northcote High School, 4—0.

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SYD THOMAS

Is He Australia's Best Winger, or Should He Return to Right Half?

A great many Australian Soccer fans think Victoria's Syd Thomas is potentially the finest outside right in the country.

They could be right, although the 23-year-old Scot much prefers to play at right half.

Good judges in former international Alec Barr, Victorian captain Tom Jack, and the coach of the Victorian Association, Len Young, insist that Syd's pace and beautiful ball control, plus his ability to cross a ball accurately while in full gallop, all add up to a great wingman.

Now that he is becoming resigned to the inevitable future as a wingman, Syd is perfecting his winger's technique, and a lot of people, Victorians in particular, would bet good money on his chances of being one of Australia's stars at the 1956 Olympic Games.

Of course, Syd has no business playing soccer at all, and it is amazing that he has been a regular selectee for Victoria since 1953, when he was chosen to tour Queensland, where he participated in many games with startling success.

You see, Syd had never played any competitive soccer until he was 18, and his only knowledge of

the game was gleaned from occasional "kick-about" with his pals at home in Dundee.

His school, Dundee High, was a rugby school, and on the way he performed as a schoolboy, Syd should now be a top-flight Rugby League player.

But the craving for the round-ball code finally mastered him when he was called up for national service, and managed to get a game when the unit team was short of a player. Since that day he has never looked back.

When he was 20, Syd emigrated to Australia, and on his first Saturday in this country he played for Brighton's third team.

The following week he was promoted to the seconds and played two games before being selected for the seniors. He kept his berth at right half the rest of the season, in which Brighton won the Dockerty Cup by beating Juventus five goals to nil, and also finishing runners-up in the league roster.

Maybe Syd has a liking for playing in Cup finals, because in three seasons in Australia he has participated in three Dockerty Cup finals, twice with Brighton (who went down to Hakoah by two goals to one in 1953) and last year with his new team, Hakoah, who beat Footscray City seven goals to two.

Syd is supremely confident that this year will make his fourth season in a final and his third time for a winning team.

When he traps a ball and commences his dazzling dash down the field, Syd Thomas is at his brilliant best. His artistic body feints, and uncanny ball control, the apparent ease with which he can bamboozle an opponent, and his own obvious delight in the mastery of dribbling, never fails to thrill fans who can appreciate a ball maestro. The same skill and eagerness to beat the other team all on his lonesome often invokes ribald but good-natured comment from his ten team-mates, who lose no time asking him why he doesn't "Eat the ba," and have done with it. And the good-natured Syd realises that they have just cause for complaint.

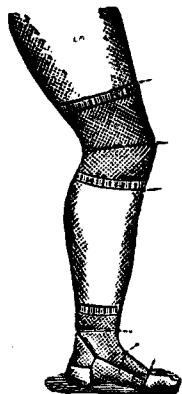
He knows he has a tendency to sometimes overdo the artistry, is inclined to hang on to the ball longer than necessary when it would be causing the opposition greater damage in some other part of the ground.

He knows his fault, and is working hard to eradicate it — and if enthusiasm, hard work and a willingness to listen to advice mean anything, it will only be a matter of time until Syd has mastered his desire to beat that "extra man" and will improve his game by quick correct first-time passing when occasion demands a pass to a team-mate.

To that end, he trains three nights a week.

Mondays, he runs with the Victorian squad, under the direction of imported English coach, Len Young, who is gradually straightening the kinks in his game; Wednesdays, he turns out with his club, Hakoah; and on Fridays, he goes to Caulfield racecourse and has a solo session in which he concentrates on building up his stamina and speed.

This night is a mixture of short-sharp sprints and a long fairly fast run round the course.



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These excerpts are reprinted, with the kind permission of the Editor of the magazine "SPORT NOVELS," from a long article on SYD THOMAS, written by Tasmanian JOHNNY MARTIN. It appears in the August issue, which is now on sale at all newsagents.

To cap off the week, Syd gets out of bed early on Sunday mornings, and (together with two or three team-mates) goes to the soccer ground and runs off any stiffness he might have gotten in the previous day's game.

I asked him to account for his bewildering dribbling skill, and he laughed when I suggested it was perhaps just a natural attribute.

"To a certain extent it's natural," he agreed, "but mostly it is a result of practice and still more practice."

Firstly, Syd does two or three laps of the ground, passing the ball from foot to foot as he moves at top speed. Then he dribbles round the centre circle, manipulating the ball solely by use of his left foot.

Afterwards he reverses his direction and concentrates on the other foot. This, he explains, eliminates any awkwardness in either foot and teaches the use of both the inside and outside of the foot.

Finally, he spaces several stakes over a distance of 30 or 40 yards and dribbles in and around the stakes, treating each as an opponent and practising his body swerves and feints.

Syd is single, which just goes to show that the local girls must be blind, because he is tall (six feet), dark, and if not exactly handsome, well at least he has an infectious grin.

When he's at fighting weight, he tips twelve stone, and it's all bone and muscle.

He doesn't drink or smoke, and his favourite sports are tennis and golf. He's just average at tennis, but if soccer didn't take up so much of his time, he'd really be a hot shot with a golf club.

When he was 16, he was Junior Champion of Downfield Golf Club, and won the Taylor Rosebowl Trophy that same year.

To-day, with little time to devote to the game, he plays off an eight handicap, and says that when his soccer days are over he might concentrate on his other love.

I asked him what was his greatest sporting thrill, and he answered without hesitation. He said:

"Being selected to play in the tour of Queensland. But I'm hoping to surpass that thrill in the near future."

He didn't have to tell me he was thinking about Melbourne, 1956. Already, after having represented Victoria three times in the Adelaide Inter-state carnival last year, and starring in the State team which beat New Zealand by one goal to nil, he has merited selection as twelfth man in an Australian Test team.

That was for the first Test against New Zealand in Melbourne this year, and it is a strong indication that Syd is due for a place in the national team soon.

His team-mate and captain, Tom Jack, is confident that Syd is on the up-grade, and forecasts: "Once in the team, he'll be there for many games."

Last year, Syd was runner-up for the "Argus" "Best and Fairest" Medal, and this year is again in second place, only two points behind the leader, Jack Wilson (of Brighton).

Modestly, Syd attributes his vast improvement during the last two years to his team-mates, Tom Jack, Henry Rice and Harry Sutherland, who have all given him the benefit of their experience in top-class British soccer.

Syd claims they have spent a lot of time helping him improve his game, pointing out his faults, and showing him how to develop his natural football skill.

He thinks that, if ever he gets that coveted berth in the Olympic team, it will be the result of a joint effort by those men and the Victorian coach, Len Young.

I asked Syd who was his toughest opponent in Australia, and he instantly mentioned former J.U.S.T. player, Ivan Senisen, a Jugo-Slav.

"Ivan has superb ball control," explained Syd, "and, once in possession of the ball, is very difficult to dispossess. Added to that he is a very solid tackler, and when you've played against him, you know you've been playing."

There's only one more thing to be said about Syd Thomas, and that is about his unusual hobby of collecting all Australian soccer news.

I queried this strange pastime, and at last I caught a glimpse of the traditional Scottish spirit as he answered me: "I send all soccer news home to father," Syd said seriously, "it helps him fill in his footba' coupon."

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Mail-Bag

★

Referee Hutchison Comments on "Jerribong"

Dear Sir,

I was most concerned with the letter published under the nom-de-plume "Jerribong," in which the writer, obviously a keen soccer fan, said a reluctant and sad farewell to the game because, as a pensioner, he found the expense too great.

It will be a long, long time before I am in the retired old-age class, but I can assure you that I was deeply touched by this letter, and I felt an urgent desire to do something to help. I am sure that all decent-thinking people who read the letter felt the same way.

Thank You, Stan Stacey

Credit for the splendid attendance at the international match, RAPID v. SOUTH CHINA, has been ladled out in every direction, starting, of course, with the drawing-power of these famous players themselves.

Sometimes, however, some of the credit is due to someone backstage, whose name is never mentioned. This time, that someone is a local soccer player . . . the man who plays left half for George Cross—Stan Stacey.

Stan works in the advertising department of the "Herald." Whether it was influence that he used or his own natural charm, the advertisements featuring the game received preferred positions on the back page.

Result . . . the ads. were seen, read and heeded, with the resulting highly satisfactory attendance.

Thank you, Stan!

Just let us give a little thought to these folks. Whilst prices of foodstuffs and manufactured goods rocket skywards, hotly pursued by ever-increasing wages, awards, and margins for skill, the pensioners are finding it increasingly difficult to merely exist on the paltry and totally inadequate 70/- per week.

I realise that this is not so with all old people of pensionable age, but those who must depend on the pension deserve all the help we can give them, instead of ignoring them.

We could probably find ex-players and even ex-officials in their midst. It would be a crime to deny them the pleasure of watching their favourite sport merely because they can't afford the 3/- admittance.

I think we all owe something to these old folk. We must not forget that they grew up in times when it was extremely difficult to set something aside for their old age.

Perhaps the V.A.S.F.A. could set a precedent for other sporting bodies, and at the same time gain popularity with all sections of the community, by making a recommendation to the clubs to allow old - age pensioners into their ground free of charge on production of the pension book.

I am sure that such a move, coupled with plenty of publicity, would prove not only very beneficial to the game, but would ensure entertainment for those who at the moment cannot afford it.

—F. HUTCHISON.

Praise for FAIRFIELD

Dear Sir,

On behalf of LIONS Soccer Club, I wish to thank all the members of the FAIRFIELD Soccer Club for the care and attention shown by them after an injury to one of our players.

Our thanks go to the referee, also, a member of Fairfield, who managed the game with a degree of objectivity not always shown even by official referees.

Further, I wish to heartily congratulate one of the Fairfield players, whose name I do not know, but who, I understand, is 62 years of age! Playing in most difficult conditions, he played the game in a spirit worthy of emulation by all players.—L. STYNDA, President, Lions Soccer Club.

★

South Africa's colours are similar to Australia; when they toured here in 1947 they played in green shirts and gold trimmings, and the Australian team used white shirts with green and gold V's on front and back.

TUNE IN

Don't forget to listen to Soccer's two sessions on the air:

FRIDAYS, 6.00-6.15, at 3K

for interviews, news and last-minute information;

SATURDAYS, 7.15-7.35, at

3XY

for news and results of all Saturday's games.

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Excitement in LATROBE VALLEY

Two postponed ADVERTISER SHIELD games and a Cup replay were fought out last Saturday, and provided plenty of thrills for supporters of the clubs involved. Here are the results:

Advertiser Shield

Moe United, 3, d. Sale United, 2.
Yallourn "A," 4, d. Morwell Rangers, 0.

Battle of Britain Cup (replay)

Tigers, 4, d. Red Triangle, 3.

Juniors (under 16)

Moe, 4, d. Yallourn, 0.
Lurgi, 7, d. Newborough, 0.
League Winners: MOE.

The draw for today's games is as follows:—

Semi-Finals, Battle of Britain Cup

Sale United v. Morwell Rangers,
at Traralgon.
Morwell v. Tigers, at Yallourn.

The first round of the International series will be played tomorrow, Sunday, August 28, at Yallourn Oval. The competition this year will be played on a points system, instead of the usual knock-out method. All three games of the First Round will be played tomorrow, and the draw is as follows:—

England v. Europe. No. 3 Oval.
Kick-off, 1.15 p.m.

Malta v. Central Europe. No. 4 Oval.
Kick-off, 1.45 p.m.

Australia v. Holland. No. 3 Oval.
Kick-off, 3 p.m.

The draw for the semi-finals of the ADVERTISER SHIELD:

Red Triangle v. Morwell.
Yallourn "A" v. Moe United.

TUNE IN

Don't forget to listen to Soccer's two sessions on the air:

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TEN CARDINAL RULES

1. Don't attend meetings.
2. If you do attend, arrive late.
3. If the weather doesn't suit you, don't even consider attending.
4. When you attend a meeting, do not neglect to loudly criticise the work of officers and other members.
5. Always make it a point to talk audibly to your neighbours while the Chairman is speaking.
6. Never accept an office . . . it is far easier to criticise office-bearers than be one yourself.
7. However, do not fail to get sore if you are not nominated for a committee.
8. If asked by the Chairman to give your opinion regarding some important matter, always reply that you have nothing to say. After the meeting, tell everybody how things ought to have been done.
9. Do nothing more than is absolutely necessary. When other members roll up their sleeves and willingly and unselfishly use their ability to help things along, howl long and loudly, particularly to the Press, that your organisation is run by a clique.
10. Hold back your dues as long as possible. Better still, don't pay at all.

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HOW THEY STAND

FIRST DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
POLONIA	15	11	3	1	40	20	25
JUVENTUS	15	11	2	2	40	14	24
BRIGHTON	16	10	2	4	43	27	22
HAKOAH	15	6	3	6	42	31	15
BOX HILL	15	7	1	7	19	36	15
J.U.S.T.	15	6	2	7	34	32	14
MORELAND	15	6	2	7	22	22	14
FOOTSCRAY CITY	15	3	3	9	17	35	9
GEORGE CROSS	15	3	2	10	25	47	8
YALLOURN	16	2	2	12	22	40	6

SECOND DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Slavia	16	15	1	0	78	27	31
Prahran	16	12	1	3	70	30	25
Sth. Melb. U.	16	8	2	6	55	40	18
Vic. Colts	16	7	1	8	39	46	15
Sunshine C.	16	6	2	8	23	41	14
Maccabi	16	5	3	8	38	51	13
Preston	16	6	1	9	32	50	13
South Yarra	16	4	3	9	29	38	11
Geelong	16	4	2	10	25	41	10
Park Rangers	16	4	2	10	36	61	10

THIRD DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Wilhelmina	15	15	0	0	98	10	30
Hellenic	16	14	1	1	77	15	29
Sandringham, C.	16	9	3	4	50	27	21
Sunshine Utd.	16	8	1	7	41	42	17
Dandenong Rov.	16	8	1	7	44	49	17
Richmond	16	6	1	9	39	40	13
Williamstown	14	5	2	7	31	37	12
Moorabbin, C.	15	3	0	12	24	79	6
F.N.D.	16	3	1	12	26	86	6
Frankston	16	2	1	13	15	60	5

Williamstown v. Moorabbin City.
 match postponed, ground unplayable.

FIRST INVITATION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Juventus	15	13	0	2	56	9	26
Brighton	16	10	2	4	51	22	22
Polonia	15	9	3	3	45	31	21
Footscray City	16	7	2	7	34	37	16
Hakoah	15	6	4	5	27	28	16
Box Hill	15	5	2	9	27	35	12
Moreland	15	5	2	7	27	48	12
J.U.S.T.	15	4	2	9	28	33	10
George Cross	16	4	1	11	17	50	9
Yallourn	15	2	4	9	15	37	8

SECOND INVITATION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Sunshine City	16	12	2	2	54	17	26
Slavia	16	10	1	5	55	28	21
South Melb.	16	10	1	5	60	38	21
Geelong	16	9	0	7	30	22	18
South Yarra	16	10	0	6	47	46	20
Wilhelmina	16	8	0	8	31	38	16
Prahran	16	7	1	8	45	53	15
Preston	16	5	1	10	24	42	11
Maccabi	16	4	1	11	21	45	9
Park Rangers	16	3	1	12	32	66	7

METROPOLITAN NORTH

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Lions	14	11	2	1	47	15	24
Coburg	13	8	4	1	47	14	20
University	14	9	1	4	37	24	19
Fairfield	13	7	2	4	29	16	16
Bayswater	14	7	0	7	52	37	14
U.Y.D.	14	6	0	8	20	36	12
Heidelberg	15	4	1	10	22	60	9
I.C.I.	14	1	2	10	20	58	4

METROPOLITAN SOUTH

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Brunswick	10	9	0	1	41	17	18
Croatia	10	8	0	2	39	15	16
Yarra Park	12	7	1	4	23	21	15
Port Melb.	11	6	0	5	33	18	12
St. Albans	11	5	0	6	19	24	10
Rosebud	12	4	1	7	24	56	9

LATROBE VALLEY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	P
Morwell	14	12	2	0	71	9	26
Moe Utd.	14	10	3	1	46	9	23
Tigers	14	6	5	3	38	30	17
Yallourn A.	14	6	2	6	38	44	14
Sale Utd.	14	4	3	7	24	42	11
Lurgi Ran.	14	4	1	9	23	41	9
Morwell Ran.	14	2	2	10	19	37	6
Red Triangle	14	2	2	10	18	65	6

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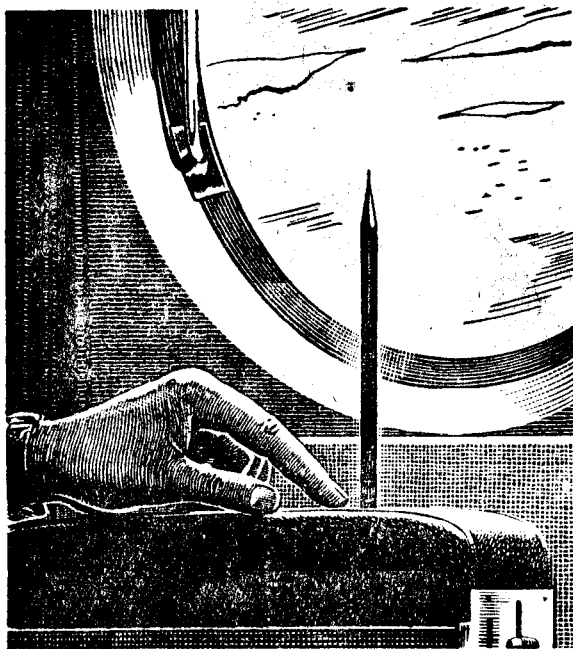
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